

Government HSA Exam Review Guide

Date of Final: _____ Name: _____ Pd: _____

Directions: This review guide **does not contain everything** you need to know for the Government HSA Exam. Nevertheless, I hope you find it helpful as you study for the HSA. Check out <http://bit.ly/GovtHSA> for more resources or scan the QR code.



Unit 1: Government & Economic Basics

- In a **federal** govt., power is shared and divided amongst the national, state, and local govts. (USA has a federal form of government.)
- In a **confederate** govt., states & local govts. are more powerful than the national govt.
- In a **unitary** govt., the national govt. is more powerful than the states & local govts.
- **Monarchies, Dictatorships, and Oligarchies** are examples of **unlimited governments** (government has more power than the people)
- **Presidential Democracy** = citizens elect both the legislature & executive
- **Parliamentary Democracy** = citizens only elect legislature; legislature then picks executive
- In a **market economy**, buyers and sellers control the economy.
- In a **command economy**, the govt. controls the economy.
- In a **mixed economy**, buyers and sellers have freedom with some govt. restrictions.
- The United States of America utilizes a mixed economy.
- The **opportunity cost** describes what you *could* be doing, but you are not doing → What is the opportunity cost if the government spends \$1 billion on education? (many possible answers)
- A resource that is **scarce** is something that people often desire, but a limited supply of it exists.

Unit 3: Political Participation

- **Political parties** are groups of people that try to win elections and control government
- What are the 2 biggest political parties in the USA today?
- **Third parties** are political parties, though not very popular—they often lack \$\$ & resources to win elections, BUT they can offer new ideas that other parties adopt
- **Interest groups** represent a specific group and lobby the government to make policies that help its members
- A **primary election** is when members of a political party vote on who should represent the party in the upcoming general election
- A **general election** consists of candidates from different parties competing to control a government position
- In order to run a successful campaign, candidates need to raise lots of **money** in order to pay for expensive campaign commercials
- People & businesses are **limited** in how much they can donate to candidates

Unit 2: The US Constitution

- The US Constitution describes how the US govt. operates.
- Making amendments can change the US Constitution → It is a hard task to accomplish (2/3 of Congress propose & 3/4 of states must ratify)
- The first ten amendments have a special name, the **Bill of Rights**
- You need to know and understand the following constitutional principles (rules) and provide an example of each:
- **Popular Sovereignty**: people control the govt.
- **Limited Govt.**: the US govt. was created to be restricted from becoming too powerful
- **Federalism**: power is shared & divided amongst the national, state, and local govts.
- **Rule of Law**: laws apply to all people ["no one is above the law"]
- **Separation of Powers**: govt. powers are divided into 3 branches
- **Checks & Balances**: each branch is limited by the other branches
- **Judicial Review**: the Supreme Court can declare govt. actions unconstitutional
- **Due Process of Law**: the govt. must provide people with certain rights before taking away their liberties (right to a lawyer, jury trial, etc. before the govt. can put you in jail and take your liberties away)

Unit 4: The Legislative Branch

- The main power of a legislative branch is to **make laws**
- The name of the national legislative branch is the **US Congress (House & Senate)**
- The name of Maryland's legislative branch is the **Maryland General Assembly (House of Delegates & State Senate)**
- Most legislatures in the USA are **bicameral** (two chamber organizations)
- Every 10 years the national govt. conducts a **census** (national population count) as stated in the US Constitution
- A state's population determines a state's representation in the House of Representatives—the more people in a state, the more members (power) a state will have in the House of Representatives
- **Reapportionment** of House seats occurs every 10 years—meaning some states gain/lose representatives if their populations changed drastically since the last census
- Each state has 2 Senators
- Some of Congress's main powers include: declaring war, raising/lowering taxes, regulating interstate commerce [business]
- The **necessary and proper clause** allows Congress to make laws not specifically written in the Constitution. Examples include: using nuclear weapons and providing healthcare
- A **bill** is a **proposed law** → a law must be passed by both the House & Senate and receive the president's signature
- For a bill to become law, both chambers must pass the same bill
- The president can **veto (reject)** a bill from becoming a law
- People, interest groups, and the media persuade the legislative branch to pass or not pass laws
- The **Civil Rights Act of 1964** prevents schools & public places from discriminating based on race, gender, and ethnicity
- The **Voting Rights Act of 1965** removed discriminating laws that prevented people from voting in elections
- **Title IX** forces schools to treat male and female students equally
- **Affirmative Action** policies that provide assistance to groups of people who have **historically** faced discrimination in admittance to universities or receiving employment

Unit 5- The Executive Branch

- The main power of the executive branch is to **enforce laws**
- The leader of the national executive branch is called the **President**
- The leader of Maryland's executive branch is called the **Governor**
- The president and vice president are elected through the **Electoral College**
- A presidential candidate cares more about winning **electoral votes** than popular votes.
- The **cabinet** is responsible for advising the president
- Regulatory agencies enforce millions of specific laws
- **Food & Drug Administration (FDA)**: regulates food/drugs sold in the USA
- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**: enforces clean air & water laws
- **Federal Communication Commission (FCC)**: regulates the media
- **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)**: enforces air safety laws
- **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)**: enforces fair business laws
- The president can **veto** (reject) bills passed by Congress
- The Senate must approve of any cabinet leader or federal judge nominated by the president
- **Executive orders**: commands given by the president that have the force of law— do not need the approval of Congress

Unit 6- The Judicial Branch

- The main power of the judicial branch is to **interpret laws**
- The highest court in the national govt. = US **Supreme Court**
- The highest court in Maryland's judicial branch = **Court of Appeals**
- The government must provide due process to all persons accused of a crime before the govt. takes away a person's freedom. Examples include:
 - **4th amendment**: bans illegal search & seizures
 - **5th amendment**: protects from self-incrimination; no double jeopardy; eminent domain protections
 - **6th amendment** guarantees a speedy & public trial
 - **8th amendment** prevents extreme bail and punishments
- The Supreme Court uses **judicial review** to declare acts of the legislative or executive branch unconstitutional.
- The Supreme Court has original and appellate jurisdiction.
- Under **criminal law**, the **prosecution** (govt.) is trying to prove a **defendant** committed a crime.
- A person can be **subpoenaed** to be a **witness** in a criminal case
- In a criminal case, the all jurors on a petit jury must be certain **beyond a reasonable doubt** (close to 100% sure) to find a suspect guilty
- If a defendant takes a **plea bargain**, they admit guilt in order to receive a smaller punishment; 90% of criminal cases end this way
- In a **civil law** case, a **plaintiff** is filing a formal complaint against a **defendant**—a person wins by having a **preponderance of evidence** (more evidence than their opponent)
- **Torts, contracts, divorces, buying property** = types of civil law

The Big 8 Court Cases:

You need to know the PRECEDENTS (legal rulings) for each of these landmark cases!!

- **Marbury v. Madison**: Established Judicial Review
- **McCullough v. Maryland**: Explained the "necessary and proper clause" & the "Supremacy Clause"
- **Plessy v. Ferguson**: Legalized "separate but equal racial segregation"
- **Brown v. Board of Education**: Overturned Plessy; segregation finally declared illegal
- **Gideon v. Wainwright**: the govt. must provide a lawyer for person accused of crime
- **Miranda v. Arizona**: Before police questioning, the accused must know their due process rights
- **Tinker v. Des Moines**: Students do have limited free-speech rights, but their speech cannot disrupt learning
- **New Jersey v. T.L.O.**: School officials can search students if they have "reasonable suspicion" → no warrant

Unit 7: Domestic, Foreign, And Economic Policy

Economic Policy:

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** measures amounts of goods/stuff made by a country
- **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** measures inflation changes in a country
- **Unemployment Rate** measure the amount of people who don't have a job,
- **Fiscal Policy** consists of the president & Congress deciding the spending and taxing policies of the government
- **Monetary Policy** consists of the **Federal Reserve** deciding how to keep the money supply stable in order to keep **inflation** balanced
- During a **recession**, the government tries to **increase the money supply (higher spending, lower taxes, decreased interest rates/reserve requirement/discount rate, buy securities)**
- During **high inflation**, the government tries to **decrease the money supply (lower spending, higher taxes, increased interest rates/reserve requirement/discount rate, sell securities)**

Domestic Policy:

- The local/state governments decide how land will be developing using **zoning boards**
- Two land development theories: **Urban Sprawl** (develop on open land—destroy green space; heavy on driving/traffic) & **Smart Growth** (rejuvenate cities that already exist—save green space; focus on making communities walkable and use public transport)
- The federal government assists people using 3 main programs:
 - **Medicare** = Healthcare assistance to *senior* citizens
 - **Medicaid** = Healthcare assistance to *low income* people
 - **Social Security** = Money assistance to *senior citizens & disabled people*

Foreign Policy:

- **Treaty**: agreement made between the US and other countries → need Senate approval
- **Sanction**: punishment → Ex: **Embargo** (refusing to trade with a country)
- **Red Cross**: provides humanitarian assistance after disasters
- **NATO**: military alliance between US, Canada, and Europe
- **NAFTA**: free trade agreement between US, Canada, Mexico
- **World Bank**: provides loans to developing countries to help them become more industrialized
- **IMF**: provides loans to countries in a financial crisis